

The activities of the Croatian Library Association in the field of lifelong education and professional development for library and information professionals

Tamara KRAJNA¹, Katica MATKOVIĆ MIKULČIĆ², Marijana MIŠETIĆ³

ABSTRACT

Croatian Library Association has strong commitment to development and promotion of library profession through informing, learning, teaching, critical evaluation, advocating, and motivating its members. Lifelong learning as well as the promotion of values of library profession and free access to information and intellectual freedom are the pillars of professional activities of the Croatian Library Association. The presentation gives an overview of various activities organized by the Croatian Library Association in the field of lifelong education and professional development for library and information professionals during the mandate period autumn 2012 to autumn 2014

KEY WORDS

Croatian Library Association; Lifelong education

Croatian Library Association (CLA) is an independent, non-governmental, non-profit professional federation of 15 regional library associations.

It was founded in 1940. Ever since its foundation, the mission of the CLA has been protection and development of the profession of librarianship in Croatia. To this end, CLA's activities focus on the participation in the creation of library legislation, providing lifelong education and professional development for library and information professionals, publishing journals and other professional literature, engaging in international cooperation, and advocating and promoting of the library profession to wider public.

CLA is dedicated to the principles of high professional performance, development and preservation of intellectual freedom, and protection of basic democratic principles in the Croatian society, in which libraries are the most important national resources for education, inclusion, culture, heritage, and science.

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The strength of the CLA is in enthusiasm and commitment of active members, good reputation of an active association within the national library community, longtime tradition of formal and informal cooperation, tradition, experience and skill in organizing events and other activities, strong publishing, projects of lifelong education and professional development.

On the other hand, CLA feels the shortage of strategic partners, lack of visibility in the broader public, and need to have stronger influence among decision-makers, who incline to support and implement political and administrative rather than professional interests or solutions.

Since its foundation, CLA has been dedicated to reinforcement of librarianship as an independent and strong profession. While in the past the efforts were directed mostly towards the establishment of independent academic programs for librarianship and library and information professionals, today, under the influence of technological development and wider social transformation and dynamism, CLA is committed to organize and provide various activities in the field of lifelong education trying to satisfy the needs of various types of libraries and their staff, focusing on various librarianship issues and topics.

CLA is not the only provider of lifelong education for library and information professionals in Croatia. Besides keeping the librarians updated, the participation in various workshops, seminars, conferences, round tables, and projects, in accordance to the provisions of the Croatian Library Act and the Ordinance on Promotion of Library Professionals, guarantees future promotion for librarians.

Since the authors consider it useful to get acquainted with various European library practices and experience, the aim of this paper is to give an overview of the CLA programs and activities organized during the mandate period 2012-2014, by which core knowledge and competences, acquired through higher education programs for librarians, were updated and upgraded according to specific needs, requirements and preferences.

Between 2012 and 2014 Croatian Library Association organized or co-organized the following workshops, seminars, conferences and celebrations of important anniversaries:

The 9th Round Table on Library Services to People with Special Needs: *Gifted Children and Young Adults in the Library and the Library for Gifted Children and Youth*

Venue: Zagreb, October 12, 2012

Organized by: Commission for Library Services to People with Special Needs (CLA), Reading Commission (CLA)

The topic of gifted children in libraries was analyzed in relation to the current legal framework (*Education in Elementary and High School Act*), educational standards, and experience of professionals who work with gifted children. Various possibilities of promoting reading skills and improving library services for gifted children were shown. Libraries were promoted as inspiring, comfortable and motivating surrounding for gifted children. Co-organizers of the round table were Commission for Elementary School Libraries and Commission for High School Libraries, Zagreb City Libraries, and National and University Library – Croatian Institute for Librarianship

The round table was attended by 110 participants.

4th workshop on Partnership in establishing libraries and library services

Venue: Split, November 9, 2012

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Organized by: Working Group for Public Advocacy (CLA), Marko Marulić City Library Split

Primarily intended for the representatives of local and regional authorities, academic, cultural, scientific and other institutions of Split and Dalmatia County and the surrounding counties, as well as for the librarians, the workshop aimed at displaying the status and the needs of public libraries, and the importance of partnership between libraries and the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports, as well as with local communities. Empowering the existing partnership and creation of the new ones has several specific goals: development of Croatian libraries and librarianship, development of a national digital library, development of a national program of lifelong education and professional training for librarians, library automation, development of educational and scientific community.

The event was attended by 22 participants.

Croatian Library Day and “Library of the Year” Award

Venue: Zadar, November 11, 2012

Organized by: Croatian Library Association, Zadar City Library

The annual “Library of the year” award for creativity, innovation and quality improvement of Croatian libraries, established by the Croatian Library Association in 2012, in occasion of the Croatian Library Day, was given. The first winner of the “Library of the Year” award was Zadar City Library, prominent for its high quality activities as one of the most significant public libraries in Croatia.



Fig. 1. Ivan Pehar, director of the Zadar City Library, after winning the “Library of the Year” award.

16th seminar Archives, Libraries, Museums : possibilities of cooperation in global information infrastructure : *Material and Virtual*

Venue: Poreč, November 28-30, 2012

Organized by: Croatian Library Association, Croatian Museum Association, Croatian Archive Association

The seminar rose from the idea of the necessity of cooperation between archives, libraries and museums and deals with the most recent trends in the area of these three communities. The themes of the seminar were: heritage institutions and new media, construction of virtual collections and establishment of digital library, digitization, education, organizational, managerial and marketing skills. Co-organizers of the seminar were National and University Library of Zagreb, Croatian State Archives, Department of Information and Communication

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Sciences (Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences University of Zagreb), Department of Information and Communication Sciences (Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences J. J. Strossmayer University of Osijek), and Department of Information Sciences University of Zadar.

The seminar was attended by 90 participants.

12th Round Table on Free Access to Information : *Social Networks and Libraries*

Venue: Zagreb, December 10, 2012

Organized by: Committee on Free Access to Information and Freedom of Expression (FAIFE), Department of Information and Communication Sciences (Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Zagreb)

The round table included a range of topics: libraries on social networks (which specific social networks to use and how, ways of communicating through social networks, the overview of Croatian libraries' profiles and activities on Facebook); librarian as the communicator on social networks; library users' education (young people and social networks; privacy protection on social networks).

The event was attended by 100 participants.

Cataloguing and classification of non-conventional library materials : conference

Venue: Sisak, December 13-14, 2012

Organized by: Commission for Cataloging (CLA); Library Association of Sisak and Moslavina County, Sisak Public Library

The theme of the expert conference was cataloging and classification of new and unconventional library materials, new media, toys, etc.

The event was attended by 106 participants.

***Children's Library Available to All* : conference**

Venue: Zagreb, March 22, 2013

Organized by: Commission for Library Services for Children and the Young Adults (CLA), Zagreb City Libraries – Medveščak Library

The expert meeting and conference *Children's Library Available to All* with library programs and services for children and young adults with special needs, including those with disabilities, and those who live in specific circumstances or are in any way deprived (e.g., children and young adults in rural and geographically remote areas, children in long-term hospital treatment, members of national minorities, children and young adults living in difficult social and economic circumstances etc.) with reference to the obstacles encountered by librarians regarding design, planning and implementation of library services.

The event was attended by 106 participants.

5th Round Table on Libraries and Contemporary Management

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Venue: Rijeka, March 23, 2013

Organized by: Commission for Library Management (CLA)

Co-organizers: Rijeka Library Association, Rijeka City Library, Rijeka University Library

The theme of the Round Table was *How and Why Libraries Should Be More Visible and More Present*, and it aimed at offering innovative ways through which the library profession could accomplish its social role in contemporary technological environment, developing methods for better and greater cooperation within the library community, and developing partnerships. Librarians must take advantage of new technologies connecting content and information, follow high ethical principles, use knowledge and skills to keep a good relationship with the public, develop visual identities of institutions, professions, associations and events as a powerful tool in conveying messages about the profession in order to achieve better visibility.

The round table was attended by 114 participants.

11th Round Table on Mobile Libraries in the Republic of Croatia and the 5th Festival of Croatian Mobile Libraries

Venue: Koprivnica, April 19, 2013

Organized by: Commission for Mobile Libraries (CLA), Commission for Public Libraries (CLA)

Co-organizers: Fran Galović Koprivnica City Library, Bilogora, Podravina and Kalnik Library Association

The title of both gatherings was *We have a mobile library! And you?*, and the aims were the following: maintain the continuity of professional gatherings and representing services of mobile libraries in Croatia in order to improve their work and to promote them, provide specialized professional training for librarians working in mobile libraries, provide the possibility of exchanging experience among employees, promote the activities of mobile libraries and encourage the development of the existing as well as the establishment of new services in counties which do not have them and, finally, take advantage of international experiences and establish new partnerships. The round table and the festival were a good occasion for promoting Croatian mobile libraries as a way of promoting activities and tasks not only of mobile libraries, but also of general public libraries.

The round table was attended by 80 participants.



Fig. 2. Participants at the 11th Round Table on Mobile Libraries and the 5th Festival of Croatian Mobile Libraries

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13th Days of Special and Academic Libraries

Venue: Opatija, May 15-18, 2013

Organized by: Special and Academic Libraries Section (CLA)

The experience of foreign and Croatian lecturers was presented through seminars, workshops and round tables on a series of subthemes: EU membership and Croatian libraries, productivity of scientific community, user education programs, libraries in recession. The participants exchanged experience and discussed various topics in order to identify possible directions for further development of academic and special libraries in Croatia.

The event was attended by 125 participants.

10th Round Table on Library Services to People with Special Needs *People with Special Needs in the Library in the New Information and Technological Environment*

Venue: Zagreb, September 27, 2013

Organized by: Commission for People with Special Needs (CLA), Reading Commission (CLA)

Co-organizers: Zagreb City Libraries – Main Library

The aim of the conference was to show how libraries in the new technological environment can facilitate the use of library services and contents to users with special needs, as well as how they can provide information and materials equally to all users.

The round table was attended by 80 participants.

4th Round Table for School Libraries : *The Role of Mass Media in Educating the Young Adults*

Venue: Sisak, October 3, 2013

Organized by: Section for School Libraries (CLA)

The aims of the round table were to analyze the consequences of media tabloidization, to show the importance of developing critical thinking and acquiring of general ethical values for children and young persons. The participants stressed the importance of introducing new school subject on media (including social media) in primary and secondary schools with librarians as educators.

The round table was attended by 83 participants.

The Meeting of Expert Group on Information Law (EGIL) and the Executive Board of EBLIDA

Venue: Zagreb, November 6-8, 2013

Organized by: EBLIDA and CLA

In the fall of 2013, on the occasion of Croatian accession to the European Union and the entry of the CLA in full membership of EBLIDA, CLA hosted two important meetings of EBLIDA delegations: Expert Group on Information Law (EGIL) and Executive Board. The main topic at the meeting of the Executive Board was the presentation of the EBLIDA campaign *Right to e-read*, which CLA joined under the slogan *Pravo na e-čitanje – ozakonimo ga!*.

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The meetings were attended by 25 invited participants from EBLIDA and the CLA.



Fig. 3. CLA participants with the EBLIDA president Klaus-Peter Böttger at the EBLIDA meetings in Zagreb.

Croatian Library Day and “Library of the Year” Award

Venue: Koprivnica, November 11, 2013

Organized by: CLA, Fran Galović Koprivnica City Library

The gala celebration of Croatian Library Day, attended by more than 100 participants, was held in Koprivnica, where Fran Galović Koprivnica City Library was awarded the “Library of the Year” award”.

11th of November was Croatian Library Day

Croatian Library Association celebrated the 11th of November, the Croatian Library Day, which commemorates the day when the first Library Law was passed in Croatia in 1960. The first Library Law gave legal, administrative and economic framework to the development of public libraries all over Croatia, and fostered the advancement of Croatian librarianship.

About 70 Croatian libraries all over Croatia participated in the celebration with various programs and activities, and the main celebration took place in the town of Koprivnica. Namely, in order to promote the contribution of Croatian libraries to the Croatian society, as well as their creativity and innovation, in the occasion of the Croatian Library Day, Croatian Library Association gives the Library of the Year Award. Among this year's nominees, Public Library Fran Galović in Koprivnica was recognized as the best and became the winner of the Library of the Year 2013 award.

For years, Public Library Fran Galović in Koprivnica (http://www.knjiznica-koprivnica.hr/eng_default.aspx) has been the cultural centre of the town and the county of Koprivnica, focusing on the benefit of its users and developing innovative and creative methods and programs for free library services and free access to information and education, fostering reading and literacy skills, preservation of cultural heritage, digital inclusion, and social inclusion of disadvantaged groups. It developed a special model of socially inclusive library services, services for the visually impaired, for babies and small children, health information, and ethnic minorities, especially the Roma population.

Even the cyclonic rainstorm we had didn't prevent librarians from coming from all corners of Croatia to Koprivnica to celebrate the award together with the employees and the Directorm, Dijana Sabolović-Krajina, who prepared the celebration and the accompanying cultural program in the galleries of the Croatian naïve art in Hlebine.

Nevia Raos

Director of the Public Library Fran Galović in Koprivnica
(Croatia)
Dijana Sabolović-Krajina receives the Library of the Year



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Fig. 4. EBLIDA report on Croatian Library Day, from EBLIDA Newsletter 11/2013 (Source: http://www.eblida.org/Newsletter%20folder%20%28uploaded%20files%29/Newsletters-2013/2013_11_November.pdf)

17th Seminar Archives, Museums, Libraries : possibilities of cooperation in global information infrastructure : *Subject, Space, Time*

Venue: Poreč, November 27-29, 2013

Organized by: CLA, Croatian Museum Association, Croatian Archive Association

The topics of the Seminar were standards, guidelines and best practice, as well as conceptual definitions and levels of description of subject, space and time in the areas of three communities.

The event was attended by 100 participants.

13th Round Table on Free Access to Information and Freedom of Speech : *Publishers and Libraries*

Venue: Zagreb, December 10, 2013

Organized by: Commission for Free Access to Information and Freedom of Speech (CLA), Department of Information and Communication Sciences (Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences University of Zagreb)

The aim of the Round Table was to point out the changes in the chain of production and distribution of books and magazines, and how these changes affect the functioning of libraries. Participants exchanged their experiences of domestic and international practice, and discussed the role of libraries in creating an educated society through three thematic blocks: Scientific and trade publishing – changes in business models; E-books in public libraries; Open access to books and magazines.

The round table was attended by 85 participants.

Buildings, Space and Equipment in Children Libraries and Libraries for Young Adults : conference

Venue: Zagreb, March 28, 2014

Organized by: Commission for Library Services to Children and Young Adults (CLA), Zagreb City Libraries – Medveščak Library

The conference dealt with buildings, space and equipment of library services for children and young adults from the point of view of energy sustainability, adaptation of space and equipment. It analyzed the functioning of the library as healthy, comfortable and safe third space in the local community. It focused on Croatian examples of newly constructed and refurbished libraries.

The program consisted of invited lectures, presentations of examples of good practice, and discussion.

The conference was attended by 120 participants, mostly children and public librarians from various parts of Croatia, directors, managers, consultants and invited guests and journalists.

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Cataloguing with a smile? : theoretical and practical approaches to contemporary cataloguing : conference

Venue: Sisak, May 15-16, 2014

Organized by: Commission for Cataloging (CLA), Vlado Gotovac Sisak City Library, Sisak and Moslavina County Library Association

The expert meeting and conference was intended for librarians engaged in cataloguing and classification of library materials. The themes of the conference were the new cataloguing rules and changes in procedures for some types of materials. 2012 conference proceedings were presented during the conference.

The event was attended by 104 participants.

1st Round Table on Public Advocacy Advocating Libraries and Librarianship

Venue: Split, May 21, 2014

Organized by: Commission for Public Advocacy (CLA), Working Group for Legal Libraries (CLA), Marko Marulić Split City Library, Faculty of Law (University of Split), Split University Library

The objectives of the Round Table were to analyze the ways and approaches in public advocating in terms of strengthening the partnerships within the professional and the wider community, to problematize some issues related to teamwork and partnership, to encourage the librarian community to strategic thinking in the development of librarian and related legislation, to exchange experiences on existing projects, to make contacts for inter-library cooperation and practice learning, and to stimulate discussion on the importance of public advocacy.

The meeting was attended by 54 participants.

Conference on the occasion of International Literacy Day Readers Clubs and Groups in Croatia

Venue: Zagreb, September 8, 2014

Organized by: Reading Commission (CLA), Croatian Reading Association, Zagreb City Libraries

The objectives of the conference were to thematize readers clubs – small reading communities that gather people with similar interests and problems, encourage members to socialize and actively spend their leisure time, reinforce love for reading, and reduce isolation in the community. The participants were trained on how to establish and run a reading club. Examples of good practice and experience of various Croatian book clubs, including Book Club of Moms from Bjelovar, student clubs from Rijeka, a virtual children's club from Zadar, Pensioners Book Club from Zagreb, teenage readers' clubs from Vinkovci and alternative book club Booksa from Zagreb, were presented.

The event was attended by about a hundred participants: librarians, writers, publishers and other cultural and public workers.

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11th Round Table on Library Services to People with Special Needs *United Nations' Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities – adapting the Convention in Croatian libraries in light of Croatia's EU membership*

Venue: Zagreb, September 19, 2014

Organized by: Commission for Library Services to People with Special Needs (CLA), Reading Commission (CLA), Zagreb City Libraries

The round table discussed the ways in which libraries can contribute to the implementation of the UN Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities, children with disabilities and people with special needs in Croatian libraries, and how they can provide access to information and education in the same way for all library users.

The round table was attended by 70 participants.

5th Round Table for School Libraries *The Educational Role of School Library*

Venue: Ivanec, October 3, 2014

Organized by: Commission for High School Libraries (CLA), Commission for Elementary School Libraries (CLA); Varaždin County Library Association

The round table dealt with the educational role of school libraries as centers of learning and places for learning and teaching, particularly important in the era of lifelong learning and continuing professional development. It also problematized issues and subjects of pedagogical knowledge, skills and competences of school librarians in primary and secondary schools. The round table was intended for librarians in elementary and high schools and students' residences, and all other interested librarians and teachers, professors and principals.

The event was attended by about a hundred participants.

39th CLA General Conference and Assembly *From Mission to Strategy*

Venue: Split, Hotel Atrium, October 15-18, 2014

Organized by: CLA, Split Librarians Association

The aim is to review the current situation and try to determine the future directions of development of libraries and librarianship in Croatia from the perspective of new technological and social changes which affect library services and set new trends in librarianship.

Within the topic it will be possible to present and summarize experiences and results, start discussions and provide insight into the future of librarianship in Croatia as a cultural and public service, especially in regard to the strategic planning and funding of library activities, educational purposes, development of professional competences, the work of regional library associations and international cooperation.

The major gathering of Croatian librarians was attended by about 300 participants.

News round-up



Split, October 15th 2014, before the opening ceremony: Alek sandra Horvat (Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Zagreb), Vesna Cmogorac (Serbian Library Association), Klaus-Peter Böttger (EBLIDA), Marijana Miletic (Croatian Library Association), Tjaša Mingo-Jukić

39th Croatian Library Association General Conference and Assembly (Split, 15-17 October)

General Conference and Assembly of the Croatian Library Association (CLA), which takes place every two years, is the biggest gathering of Croatian librarians working in all types of libraries (public, school, academic, special, and national). This year, the 39th General Conference and Assembly of the CLA took place in Split, the second largest Croatian city (about 180,000 inhabitants), and the cultural and economic centre of the region of Dalmatia, from October 15th to 17th.

The event, organised along with the great help and enthusiasm of the regional library association (Split Library Association) gathered nearly 300 participants from Croatia, Europe, and the USA.

The Conference focused on the main theme Libraries – from Mission to Strategy. It reviewed the current situation and future direction of the development of libraries and librarianship in Croatia from the perspective of new technological and social changes which affect library services and set new trends in librarianship.

Within the topic, participants presented and summarised experiences and results, started discussions and provided insight into the future of librarianship in Croatia as a cultural and public service, especially in regard to the strategic planning and funding of library activities, educational purposes, development of professional competences, work of regional library associations, and international cooperation.

Keynote speakers were IFLA President-elect Donna Scheeder, Gerald Leitner (IFLA/MLAS; EBLIDA), and Daniela Živković (University of Zagreb).

Donna Scheeder (The IFLA Trend Report: a Call to Action) discussed the impact of 5 trends, identified and extensively analysed in the IFLA Trend Report, in various regions of the world. The trends represent change, and change provides opportunities to shape future impacts and position libraries, library associations and the library profession in a changing world. The trends are actually a call to action, concluded Donna Scheeder.

In his presentation, entitled "The Right to E-Read", Gerald Leitner (pictured on the right) underlined the urgent need for an updated, modern European copyright framework, that will guarantee access to e-books through libraries, and, at the same time, effective recognition and remuneration of authors and other rights holders.

Daniela Živković, the third keynote speaker (Libraries from Mission to Strategy in the Croatian context), stressed the most important ways new technologies influence Croatian libraries particularly regarding library materials, users, and the public. Special attention was given to digitisation, copyright, privacy, public access, and legal deposit issues, as well as current library legislation in Croatia.



Keynote speakers also moderated the panel discussion "Current Issues of the European Librarianship", which was intended for the leaders of library associations of Croatia and nearby countries. The panel discussion gave them the possibility to exchange experiences with the most prominent European librarians. At the same time, leading European library professionals were able to gain an insight in the work of library association which are less present on the European scene. Apart from the three plenary sessions, 34 presentations and 6 panel discussions in parallel sessions, as well as 23 poster presentations, were held. All presentations and panel discussions reached conclusions, that will direct and shape activities of the CLA in the next two-year period.

The program of the assembly consisted of bi-annual reports, elections for the CLA management and professional bodies, and professional awards ceremony. New president of the CLA in the term 2014-2016 is Dunja Holcer, from the public library „Vlado Gotovac“ in Sisak.

After the conference and assembly, a special cultural program, an excursion to the Split inland surroundings (the historic Republic of Poljica, the town of Trilj, the river Cetina) was organised.

Croatian Library Association wishes to thank the colleagues and friends from EBLIDA and IFLA, as well as those from the library associations in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Slovenia, Hungary, Italy and Slovakia, for participating at the 39th CLA General Conference and Assembly, for exchanging their rich knowledge and experience, and for sharing great time and strengthening friendship with Croatian librarians.

Nevia Raos
Croatian Library Association

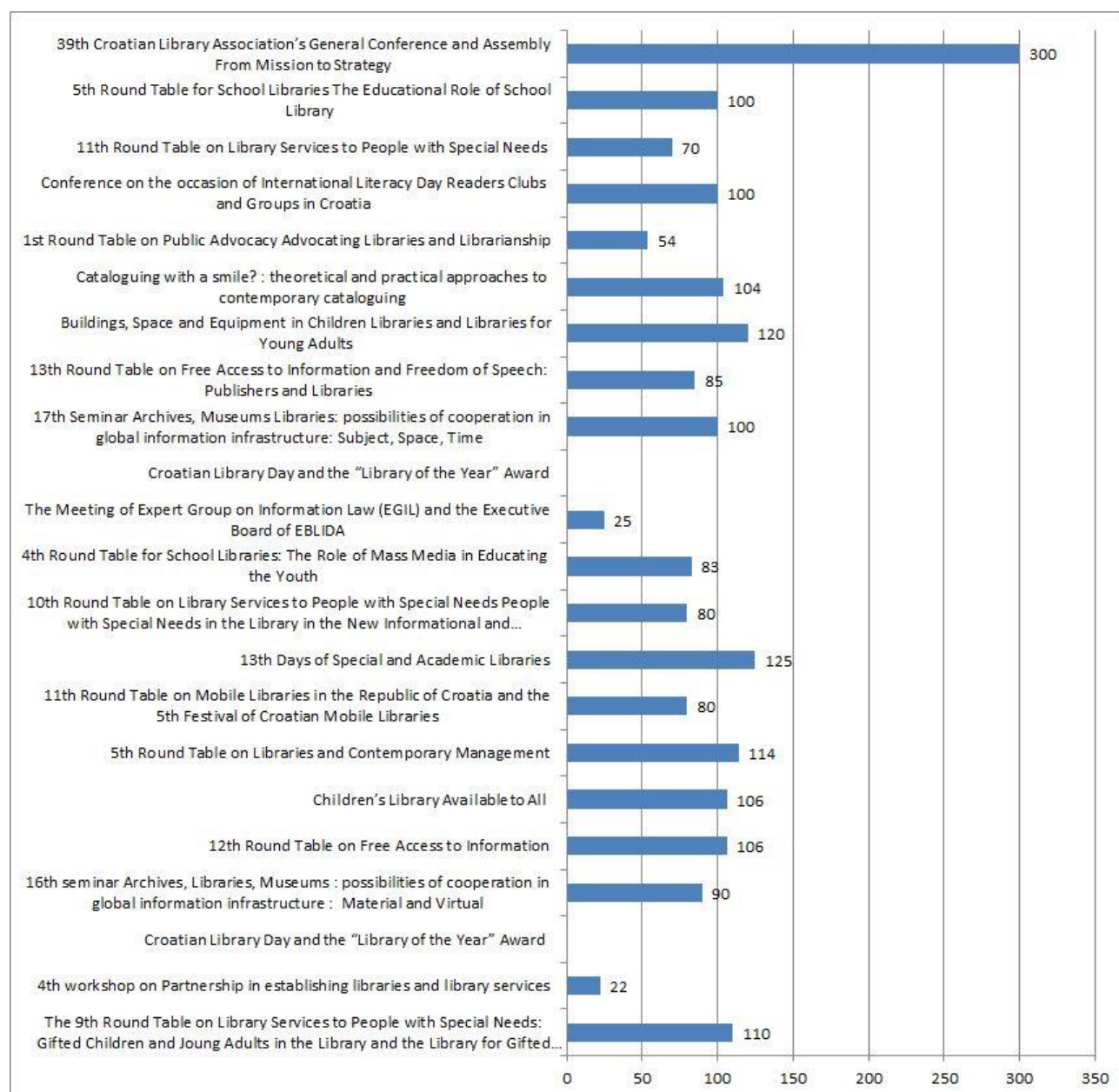


Split, October 16th 2014, during the Assembly: Katja Matković Miletic (CLA Vice-President) Klaus-Peter Böttger (EBLIDA President), Marijana Miletic (CLA President)

Fig. 5. EBLIDA report on Croatian Library Day, from EBLIDA Newsletter 11/2013 (Source: http://www.eblida.org/Newsletter%20folder%20%28uploaded%20files%29/Newsletters-2014/11_Newsletter_November_2014.pdf)

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Tab. 1. Number of participants at workshops, seminars, meetings, round tables and conferences organized by the CLA (2012-2014).

Tab. 2.

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Conclusion

In the mandate period from 2012 to 2014, Croatian Library Association (CLA) organized 23 different national and international professional meetings (conferences, round tables, seminars, workshops) on various topics and issues, in which Croatian librarians were both lecturers and audience. Some of the meetings have become traditional, while others have been introduced recently, according to the emerging needs of library professionals.

Unlike other lifelong learning providers, whose predominant activities are mostly intensive half-day courses based on teaching and lecturing, the activities of lifelong education and professional development for library and information professionals organized by the CLA are based exclusively on group work, informing, learning, critical evaluation, discussion, and exchange of experience and knowledge within librarian community.

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Katica Matković Mikulčić, librarian and writer, is the director of Velika Gorica City library. She is an active member of the Croatian Library Association. She was in charge of various projects aiming at promotion of books and reading. She participated in numerous seminars, conferences and workshops. Also, she is the author of articles and conference papers on various topics, in particular those regarding public librarianship and cultural heritage. Besides writing fiction, she is the author of several books for children.



Marijana Mišetić graduated English language and literature and Italian language and literature at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Zagreb. Later she graduated Librarianship and took up the position of a subject specialist in the Library of the Italian Studies Department, where she has been working ever since, today as a library adviser. She has been a member of the Croatian Library Council and a member of IFLA MLAS Standing Committee 2011-2015. She was the President of the Croatian Library Association 2010-2012, and 2012-2014 and now holds the position of the president of the CLA Professional Board. She was awarded a Kukuljević Charter in recognition for her continuous efforts to advance library services and library profession in Croatia.

